

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending in the above-identified application, of which claims 19-28 are withdrawn. With this amendment, claims 1, 8 and 10 were amended and claims 9 and 18 were cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1-18 are at issue in the above-identified application.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Indefiniteness Rejection of Claims

Claims 8 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims & 35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 1-3, 8-12, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Carey et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,452,761). Claims 4-7 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Carey et al.* Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

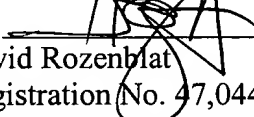
Claim 1 recites A magnetoresistance-effect element comprising a magnetism-sensing section the electric resistance of which changes in accordance with an external magnetic field, a low-resistance metal layer contacting the magnetism-sensing section, and an oxide layer provided on that surface of the low-resistance metal layer which faces away from the magnetism-sensing section, wherein a total thickness of the low-resistance metal layer and oxide layer ranges from 0.5 nm to 1.5 nm. *Carey et al.* fails to teach or disclose a magnetoresistance-effect element wherein a total thickness of a low-resistance metal layer and an oxide layer ranges from 0.5 nm to 1.5 nm. *Carey et al.* does disclose forming an aluminum metal layer deposited to a thickness of 100 Angstroms (10 nm) or thicker and then exposed to an oxygen plasma source, the oxidized metal layer formed is typically 20 Angstroms (2 nm) thick or less. *Carey et al.* does

not teach or disclose a low resistance metal layer and an oxide layer having a thickness ranging from 0.5 nm to 1.5 nm, as recited in claim 1. Layers disclosed by *Carey et al.* have a thickness much greater than 1.5 nm, such as 10 nm or thicker. Therefore, Applicants conclude that *Carey et al.* fails to teach or disclose a magnetoresistance-effect element wherein a total thickness of a low resistance metal layer and an oxide layer ranges from 0.5 nm to 1.5 nm. Withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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